

**PROJECT CENSORED
2005: THE 25 BIG
STORIES IGNORED BY
THE US NEWS MEDIA**

Every year, researchers at Project Censored pick through volumes of print and broadcast news to see which of the past year's most important stories aren't receiving the kind of attention they deserve.

Every one of this year's picks merited prominent placement on the evening news and the dailies' front pages. Instead, they went virtually ignored.

1. Wealth inequality in 21st century threatens economy and democracy

Despite the official line about the USA's supposed economic recovery, wealth inequality in the United States has almost doubled over the past 30 years. In 1998, the richest 1% of households owned 38% of the nation's wealth. The top 5% owned almost 60% of the wealth.

Today, almost one-sixth of the world's population—940 million people—"already live in squalid, unhealthy areas, mostly without water, sanitation, public services, or legal security," John Vidal wrote in the UK *Guardian*.

2. Ashcroft vs the human rights law that holds corporations accountable

For decades the United States has trained right-wing insurgents and



torturers, toppled democratically elected governments and propped up brutal dictatorships abroad—all in the interest of corporate profits. But rarely are the agents of repression ever held accountable for the tens of thousands of deaths and the brutal cycles of poverty, subjugation, environmental destruction and violence they leave in their wake.

But recently, lawyers have found a way to seek at least a modicum of justice for victims. The Alien Tort Claims Act (ATCA), a 215-year-old law originally passed to prosecute pirates for crimes committed on the high seas, allows non-citizens to sue any individual or corporation present on US soil.

Human rights lawyers have pursued 100 cases under the ATCA since 1980. Ten years ago, victims began using the act to go after corporate profiteers, too.

But Attorney-General John Ashcroft's Justice Department has set its sights on the Act, claiming in a brief last year [2002] that the law threatens "important foreign policy interests" associated with the War on Terrorism.

3. Bush administration manipulates science and censors scientists

Government interference in scientific research has become so bad that 60 of the country's top scientists, including 20 Nobel laureates, issued a statement in February citing the ways

the Bush administration has distorted scientific data "for partisan political ends" and calling for regulatory action.

4. High uranium levels found in troops and civilians

Almost 10,000 US troops died within 10 years of serving in the first Gulf War, researchers have found. And more than a third of those still alive have filed Gulf War syndrome-related claims.

More recently, the Uranium Medical Research Center, an independent group of US and Canadian scientists that has conducted studies of Afghan civilians, found overwhelming evidence that the United States is also using *non*-depleted uranium in its weapons, which is far more radioactive than depleted uranium.

5. Wholesale giveaway of US natural resources

The US administration has launched the greatest giveaway of public natural resources in more than a century. Yet few in the mainstream media have bothered to analyse these plans and uncover the lies behind the administration's rhetorical manipulations.

Vice-President Dick Cheney's infamous, secretive, industry-laden energy task force produced what can be boiled down to two main recommendations: "lower the environmental bar and pay corporations to jump over it", writes Adam Werbach, executive director of the Common Assets Defense Fund and former Sierra Club president.



"...and that one's for surviving a four-month media attack at Abu Ghraib prison."

6. Sale of electoral politics

A switch to electronic voting may seem innocent enough—until you look at who's implementing it, and how. Indeed, the transfer represents the privatisation of the voting process in the hands of a select few fervent GOP supporters who've insisted on keeping their operating systems and codes a trade secret—meaning they enjoy absolute control over the entire voting process, including ballot counting and oversight. There's no paper trail.

7. Conservative organisation drives judicial appointments

Ever since the Reagan administration, the neoconservatives have pursued an aggressive campaign to stack the federal courts with right-wing judges. Their main vehicle: the Federalist Society of Law and Public Policy, founded in 1982 by a small group of radically conservative law students at the University of Chicago.

8. Secrets of Cheney's energy task force come to light

As the Bush administration continues to protect the iron wall of secrecy it's erected around Cheney's energy task force, at least two documents confirm longstanding suspicions that the administration's foreign policy is being driven by the dictates of the energy industry.

9. Widow brings RICO case against US government for 9/11

As the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, also known as the 9/11 Commission, completed its first year, Ellen Mariani and her attorney held a press conference on the steps of the US District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania to announce her own startling conclusions.

Mariani, wife of Louis Neil Mariani, who died when terrorists flew United Airlines Flight 175 into the World Trade Center's south tower, has come to believe top American officials—including Bush, Cheney, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and others—had foreknowledge of the attacks yet failed to prevent them and have since been covering up the truth.

10. New nuke plants: taxpayers' support, industry profits

If you thought nuclear energy was dead, think again: the Bush administration's energy bill—yet another product of

Cheney's industry-stacked energy task force—provides taxpayer cash for companies that build new nukes.

11. The media can legally lie

In 2003, a Florida Court of Appeal ruled that there are no written rules against distorting news in the media. It agreed with an argument by Fox TV that, under the First Amendment, broadcasters have the right to lie or deliberately distort news reports on public airwaves. Under the current ruling, it is up to the public to discover whether or not they're being lied to.

12. The destabilisation of Haiti

On 29 February 2004, Haiti's President Jean-Bertrand Aristide was forced into exile by the American military. While US officials were eventually forced to acknowledge the kidnapping allegations, they were quick to discredit them and deny responsibility. Meanwhile, the circumstances that led to the current situation in Haiti, as well as the history of US involvement, are being ignored by US officials and the mainstream media.

13. Schwarzenegger met with Enron's Ken Lay before Recall

In 2002, while the California Governor and his deputy were attempting to reregulate the energy industry (and get back the \$9 billion defrauded from Californian taxpayers by Enron and other energy companies), Arnold Schwarzenegger was being groomed to overthrow Governor Davis in a

Recall—and to cancel plans to reregulate or recoup the \$9 billion. Back in May 2001, in the midst of California's energy crisis, Schwarzenegger met with Enron's Ken Lay to discuss "fixing" California's energy crisis.

14. New bill threatens intellectual freedom

The International Studies in Higher Education Act of 2003 threatens academic freedom and the curriculum. Under this act, professors whose ideological principles do not support US practices abroad can have their appointments terminated, any course curriculum containing criticism of US foreign policy can be censored, and any course deemed anti-American can be barred from the classroom.

15. US develops lethal new bioweapons

Scientists funded by the US government have developed a way to make pox viruses incredibly deadly. The stated goal of this research is to fight possible bioterror attacks. The new virus kills all mice, even if they have been given antiviral drugs along with a vaccine that would normally protect them from death.

16. Law enforcement agencies spy on innocent citizens

With little media comment, federal, state and local agencies have begun working as partners in the collection, analysis and dissemination of intelligence



... GLOBAL NEWS ...

information. Under the Global Intelligence Working Group that oversees the new network, police departments receive increased funding for surveillance activity. This has resulted in the recent COINTELPRO-style instances of police infiltration of groups critical of government policies.

17. US government represses Iraqi labour unions in privatisation quest

The US is calling for the privatisation of state-owned Iraqi industries such as oil and water, but has chosen not to overturn Saddam-era edicts that outlaw unions. The economic policies of occupying authorities are transforming Iraq's working people into a pool of low-waged, semi-employed labour, desperate for jobs at any price.

18. Media and government ignore dwindling oil supplies

Even industry executives affirm that oil is close to reaching, or may have already reached, its highest levels of production potential. Once the peak is reached, oil prices will start to rise. As oil decline accelerates, prices will rise even faster, with devastating effects to the US economy. Over the years, US leaders, bowing to oil industry pressure, have not worked to develop viable alternatives.

19. Global food cartel is fast becoming the world's supermarket

Agribusiness and supermarket alliances are transforming the agri-food system into a powerful network of transnational corporations. They now have the power to control the world's food supply at every

stage of food production. As fewer corporations control food production, traditional farming is becoming a high-tech form of serfdom. Lack of competition is leading to higher prices, lower choice and quality, and also employee abuse.

20. Extreme weather prompts new warning from UN

In 2003, the UN's World Meteorological Organization reported unprecedented levels of extreme weather and climate occurrences all over the world.

21. US forces GMOs on the world

The Bush administration is trying to force Europe to drop trade barriers against genetically modified organisms (GMOs). Meanwhile, the agricultural biotechnology industry is focusing even more intently on developing countries, where regulations governing GMO use are generally more lax. At the same time, biotech promoters continue to suppress studies that show GMOs may have adverse effects on health and the environment.

22. Exporting censorship to Iraq

After the fall of Saddam Hussein, instead of hiring a media outlet to run the Iraqi media or simply allowing the news groups already there to continue reporting, the Pentagon chose a defence contractor to define the news.

23. Brazil opposes US-style FTAA, but provides little comfort for poor

The Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) could become the biggest trading bloc in history, expanding NAFTA to

34 countries from Canada to the bottom of South America. This deal is unlikely to meet its January 2005 deadline, now that the second-largest player in the negotiations, Brazil, is holding back. However, Brazilian President Lula has begun, of his own volition, to institute his own brand of FTAA austerity policies that are sure to drive the region's poor deeper into poverty.

24. Reinstating the draft in the USA

The Selective Service System (SSS), the Bush administration and the Pentagon have been quietly moving to fill draft board vacancies nationwide in order to prepare for a military draft that could start as early as 15 June 2005. Several million dollars have been added to the 2004 SSS budget. Meanwhile, through an ongoing militarisation of public school systems, the Pentagon has begun efforts to double the number of Latinos in the US military by 2006.

25. Wal-Mart brings inequity and low prices to the world

The vision of the international division of Wal-Mart is one where Wal-Mart becomes a global brand, just like McDonald's or Coca-Cola, monopolising the global retail market. The next five or six years could see about 5,000 to 6,000 Wal-Mart stores established outside the United States. Wal-Mart is Americanising retailing around the world and exercising an inordinate amount of economic power.

(Source: *Project Censored, Sonoma State University, California, USA, 4 September 2004, <http://www.projectcensored.org>. Note that all references relating to these items are available at the Project Censored website.*)



"My fellow Americans: Due to a hectic week here at the White House, someone lost the key to the big warehouse that stores all the voting machines. Therefore, in the interests of responsible government, I am postponing the election until further notice. God bless."

STUDIES PROVE WATER FLUORIDATION HAS NO BENEFIT

Dental examinations of 4,800 South Australian ten- to fifteen-year-olds' permanent teeth have revealed unexpected results—similar cavity rates whether the children drank fluoridated water or not—report Armfield and Spencer in the August 2004 issue of *Community Dentistry and Oral Epidemiology*. The children sampled lived in fluoridated and non-fluoridated metropolitan and rural areas of South Australia.

Meanwhile, in the USA, a study has shown that pre-school children's tooth decay rates doubled after fluoridation became law in the state of Kentucky. In

1987, 28% of Kentucky pre-schoolers developed cavities. That number increased to 47% in 2001, according to the July/August 2003 issue of *Pediatric Dentistry*.

(Source: *New York State Coalition Opposed to Fluoridation*, 16 August 2004, via <http://www.enn.com>. Also see article, "The Absurdities of Water Fluoridation", and review of Christopher Bryson's book, *The Fluoride Deception*, in this issue. Ed.)

WERE 9/11 HIJACKERS HELPED BY DICK CHENEY?

At the time of the hijackings of September 11, 2001, there were as many as 22 hijacked aircraft on NORAD's radar screen.

As Mike Ruppert delineates in his upcoming book, *Crossing the Rubicon*, there were a number of "Field Training Exercises" in progress on the morning of 9/11. Each and every one (and perhaps many others we may not yet know of) was under the control of US Vice President Dick Cheney.

The following are some of the military/wargame exercises:

- **Northern Vigilance:** This transferred most of the combat-ready interceptors and possibly many AWACS from the northeast into northern Canada and Alaska. This explains, in part, why there were only eight combat interceptors in the NE on 9/11.

- **Vigilant Guardian:** This exercise simulated hijacked planes in the northeast sector. The 9/11 Commission made mention of only this single exercise and lied about its purpose, i.e., an exercise to intercept Russian bombers.

- **Vigilant Warrior and Northern Guardian:** These exercises also simulated hijacked planes in the northeast sector.

Some of these exercises were "live fly" drills where actual aircraft, likely flown by remote control, were simulating hijacked aircraft. Some of the drills electronically added the hijacked aircraft into the system. And all this as the *real* hijackings began.

NORAD could not tell the difference between the 17 bogus blips and the five actual hijacked aircraft blips, but Dick Cheney supposedly could.

(Source: Via cia-drugs@yahoo.com, 7 September 2004. For more information on Mike Ruppert's book, *Crossing the Rubicon: The Decline of the American Empire at the End of the Age of Oil*, see website <http://www.copvcia.com> or <http://www.fromthewilderness.com>.)

THE NEW WORLD DOMINION

by General Leonid Ivashov

I've spoken many times of the emergence of a new geopolitical subject of supranational character onto the world arena. This is the world financial elite and transnational corporations, consolidated in the name of world dominion, control over all countries and all coalitions of countries. This new geopolitical phenomenon is interesting in that it unites the richest people on the planet and a developed network of financial institutions—more than 500 of the mightiest TNCs, possessing capital in excess of 16 trillion dollars and accounting for more than 25% of the world's industrial production.

Without question the leading role is played here by the 358 richest people on Earth, possessing as much wealth as 2.5 billion inhabitants of the Third World. Their ranks are being swelled by the Russian "elite" and the wealthiest people of Second World countries. The peculiar civilisational feature of these "elites" is the abandonment of their respective countries' interests and the acceptance of the single world oligarchy's system of values. For them, the state is merely a means of further enrichment, an instrument to crush any resistance and maintain control over the world.

The toolchest of world dominion and control includes financial instruments (especially the virtual financial pyramid), the network of international financial institutions, commissions, committees, clubs and governments of many countries. The ideology of this geopolitical subject consists of a combination of double standards in international relations, radical liberalism, borders open for expansion, and standardised "democratic" regimes obedient to the will of the oligarchs. The mass media, that arch-important tool, cardinaly alter the worldview and psychology of the public, imposing on society, the state and the individual an "all-permissive" behaviour pattern.

After the end of the "Cold War" and the breakup of the USSR, the last remaining arguments in the battle for control over territory and resources have become military force, intelligence agencies and the network of international terrorism.

The world financial empire spares no expense to create a mighty military battering-ram in the form of the American armed forces and NATO to expand its system of global surveillance and control over every square metre of land and sea—including the annihilation of planes at take-off and missiles at launch, and strikes at any spot on the planet at any moment. Intimidating the whole world and breaking its will to resist will guarantee full dominion for the world oligarchy and mega-profits for the financial elite.

How can you tell the truth (be you the President of the USA or any other country) if you serve a cruel and all-powerful master—the international financial mafia—who will accept you into the world elite only in exchange for unquestioning submission? And if you refuse? Then you'll share the fate of John F. Kennedy, Olaf Palme, Slobodan Milosevic, Saddam Hussein and the leaders of many other countries. For loyal service, on the other hand, you'll be well off for life, like Shevardnadze, or maybe even get a Nobel Prize, like Gorbachev.

As for NATO, though one gets the impression that the US reigns supreme there, this is not exactly the case. American military men, diplomats and politicians simply continue to earn their daily bread, often in ignorance of the true hierarchy of power.

From my former position I know of certain things which happened during work on the Russia-NATO Founding Act, prevention of the anti-Yugoslav aggression, the new NATO Strategic Conception, etc., when leading NATO country heads-of-state understood the danger of the decisions they were making but were powerless to do anything about them. Some invisible force pushed them to commit actions destructive of international peace. Clinton's wavering over the question of going to war against Yugoslavia cost him the Monica Lewinsky scandal. The threat of impeachment was lifted only after his decision to commit to war.

That's why the hopes of Russian generals, diplomats and politicians to appease NATO's appetites are in vain, inasmuch as those appetites are limitless: the goal of the alliance's true masters is lordship over Planet Earth. Our appeasers would do well to read more carefully the works of such mouthpieces of the new world elite as Z. Brzezinski and specialists from the RAND Corporation and other research institutes. Their works are regarded as plans of action by the Pentagon and NATO. Brzezinski, for example, in his 1993 book, *Out of Control*, openly declared that "if America wishes to control the world, and it does", then it must establish supremacy over Eurasia, especially its "'Western periphery' (the European Union) and its heart (Russia), the Middle East, Central Asia and the oil reserves located there".

(Source: General Leonid Ivashov, "Who's Noticing the NATO Danger?" (trans. from Russian), in *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, 8 April 2004, http://oag.ru/views/ivashov_who.html)